

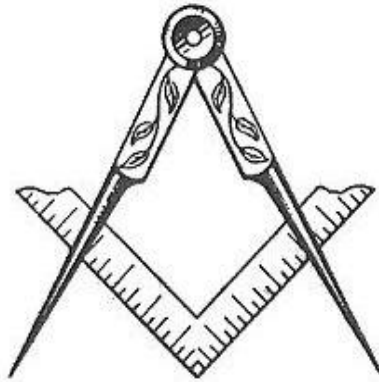


West Lancashire Freemasons

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF WEST LANCASHIRE

"Furthering your Masonic education through mentoring"

New Initiates Guide to Freemasonry



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Lodge 1st Degree Tracing Board

1. Why have you become a freemason?

Before you completed your application to join, you will probably have received leaflets to give you an insight into Freemasonry and what we practice and believe. In summary you will have probably already have learned the following:

- Masonry consists of a body of men banded together for the purpose of mutual intellectual, social and moral improvement and pledged to preserve our mysteries, privileges, customs and ceremonials. Its members endeavour to cultivate and exhibit brotherly love, relief and truth, to one another and the world at large.
- The essential condition of membership is a belief in a Supreme Being.
- Masonry recognises no distinction of religion and emphasises the duties of loyalty and citizenship. It does not permit any of its members to discuss religious or political questions in Lodge.
- Masonry offers no pecuniary advantages binding one Mason to deal with another, or to support him in any way in the ordinary business relations of life.
- We support a wide variety of Masonic and non-Masonic charities but Masonry is not in any financial sense a mutual-benefit society. Masonic charities are solely for the less fortunate.
- Masonry teaches that a man's first duty is his family. People should not therefore join if the associated fees and charitable contributions will be to the detriment to their loved ones.

Therefore everyone Freemason should be sure:

- he desires the intellectual and moral improvement of himself and others;
- he is willing to devote time, means and efforts in the promotion of brotherly love, relief and truth;
- he seeks no commercial, social or pecuniary advantages; and
- he is able to afford the necessary expenditure without detriment to himself or his dependants.

The reasons why people join and what they like about Freemasonry vary from person to person. You will have your own reasons, but the following are taken from a sample of new members:

- Quest for knowledge - because they are intrigued about the history and mysteries held within Freemasonry
- Charity - because they feel it is a conduit to put back into society, through Masonic charity giving
- Brotherhood - because it is a leveller, meaning you meet (and indeed become friends with) a broad spectrum of people, from Chairmen of large PLCs to dustmen, people that live on your estate to foreign nationals, people from 21 to 90+ yrs of age, essentially, a very extensive male demographic. Simply by mixing with people from different walks of life helps to broaden the mind
- Self improvement - to become a better person
- Learning - networking, learning from peers and mentors and learning from practising ritual (if you hold office)

- After dinner speech-making (watching others and on occasion making a simple speech)
- Unusual - because there is nothing quite like it in life
- Achievement - progressing through office to Worshipful Master
- To become a better person.

You have recently joined a Masonic lodge in the Province of West Lancashire - but in so doing you have joined one of the world's oldest fraternal societies. You are now a member of The Craft, a term used to describe the three degrees of freemasonry. By being initiated into your Masonic Lodge you have become a member of one of the worlds oldest secular fraternal societies.

There are about 400,000 members in the United Kingdom housed in nearly 8,000 lodges worldwide, there are about 6 million Freemasons. As a member of the fraternity, you can visit any of these lodges throughout the world, but it is advisable to check with your lodge secretary before you attempt to make a visit overseas.

Having recently joined an ancient and honourable institution, in common with many other institutions, there are rules of protocol, many unwritten, which should be understood in order to help you settle into your lodge and to make your time in Masonry more enjoyable.

2. Your Progression in Freemasonry

As an Entered Apprentice your first step is to progress through your remaining two degrees, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. At your Initiation you were presented with the Book of Constitutions. Do not try to learn it - this was presented to you as a useful reference for further information about our organisation.

Your Lodge Committee will usually decide the workings for the year ahead, which includes when they think the time is right for your progression, although one meeting a year is reserved for the Installation of the Master. It is hoped, however, that you will have the support of your proposer and seconder. Your Lodge should also be appointing a knowledgeable brother as your mentor, who will be able to answer any questions you may have, or at least know where to go to find the answer for you.

When you become a Master Mason, freemasonry really begins to open up and privileges include:

- Attending the whole workings of every ceremony (except a small section of the Worshipful Masters Installation meeting)
- Taking full part as an officer within your mother Lodge or another Lodge you may join
- Joining other Lodges in the UK or abroad
- Joining other Orders beyond the Craft, such as the Holy Royal Arch (Chapter)
- Visiting other Lodges in the UK more easily. This is possible now but you may not see very much!
- Visiting Lodges abroad.

It is normal that once you have attained these three degrees you may wish to start to move through the seven progressive offices, resulting in you eventually becoming the Worshipful Master of the lodge. Each progressive officer has a role to play in each ceremony that is performed, although taking office is your choice. If you decide to hold office, you will be expected to learn your part in the ritual and play a role in the team that carry out the various ceremonies. This is memorised from the Ritual Book you will be given when you become a Master Mason. The Ritual Book has missing or abbreviated words to keep the ceremony special, but you will be given these missing or abbreviated words verbally when required. You can gain help learning the ritual through a Lodge of Instruction (LoI). At LoI, brethren meet to practice and perfect the various ceremonies in an informal atmosphere. This is where the ritual becomes familiar, the meaning of obscure passages explained, and where questions can be answered.

Most Lodges operate a LoI or share LoI with other Lodges. Above all, LoI provides an opportunity to meet fellow Brethren in a relaxed environment becoming more acquainted with each other, developing teamwork and camaraderie. Many Masonic friendships develop through the LoI. Whilst the words of the ritual are usually learned at home, regular attendance at LoI with the opportunity to practice and rehearse builds knowledge, confidence and skill and enables us to give candidates the most meaningful experience during the ceremonies.

We are all continually learning within our Masonic lives, and although you may not need to practice for an office at the moment, it is recommended that you attend LoI as soon as possible. You will have to leave the room during rehearsal of Degrees you have yet to experience, nevertheless you will find regular attendance at LoI very

worthwhile and fulfilling and they will enable you to better become a valuable member of your Lodge.

At the LoI there will be a mix of officers of the Lodge, Past Masters, and other brethren. The person in charge of the LoI is known as The Preceptor.

There may well be a time when you are unable to attend LoI due to personal and work commitments. But, if you have agreed to take a role at a forthcoming LoI and then find that you are unable to attend please advise the Preceptor in advance so that alternative arrangements can be made. There is no dress code and you do not need your regalia for LoI.

You may also hear the term "Chapter" used. This refers to the Holy Royal Arch. Although there are numerous other Masonic Orders which you will get to hear about in time, none of them form part of Pure Ancient Masonry. The Craft teaches you about man's relationship with man, whereas the Holy Royal Arch teaches about man's relationship with his God. It is only by combining the two that you can ever become a complete mason. For this reason it is likely to be more beneficial to join the Holy Royal Arch before considering other Masonic Orders. You are eligible to join (called exaltation) a Royal Arch Chapter four weeks after the date of becoming a Master Mason. To find out more please ask your proposer, Lodge secretary, mentor or any brother you see wearing a Royal Arch jewel, which is a jewel suspended from a tri-colour, red, or white ribbon.

You will learn about other Masonic Orders, but it is fairly common practice to join The Holy Royal Arch as your first priority.

3. Lodge Meetings, The Festive Board and Visiting Other Lodges

The meetings are in two parts – the Lodge Meeting and the Festive Board. You should do your best to attend all meetings, but as an Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft or even as a Master Mason at the Worshipful Master's installation, you will have to retire from the Lodge for a short while, when workings above your degree are being performed. You will usually be accompanied by your mentor or another member when this happens, and you may like to ask beforehand who will do so.

If, for any reason, you are unable to attend a meeting please notify the secretary at your earliest convenience.

Most Lodges have a committee that agrees how many regular and emergency meetings there are a year (if any) and start times. So put them in your diary a year in advance as this makes it easier to plan personal activities around them. Before each meeting you will receive a Summons, which includes an agenda – bring this to each meeting. All Officers have a designated seat and there are often seating places for Grand Officers, Lodge members and guests. Please check with your Lodge where you should sit if you are unsure.

As in any association there is a certain amount of administrative procedure: minutes of the last meeting, discussion and voting on financial matters, news and correspondence, proposing and balloting for new members. Part of the meeting will usually include collecting Alms, when you will be expected to donate a small sum to charity.

There are four ceremonies which form the core of the formal Lodge meeting:

- 1 First Degree or Ceremony of Initiation
- 2 Second Degree or Ceremony of Passing
- 3 Third Degree or Ceremony of Raising
- 4 The Ceremony of Installation. This annual ceremony installs the Worshipful Master who then appoints his officers for the year ahead

The Lodge meetings are followed by a dinner – the 'Festive Board' – which is the best opportunity to meet fellow and visiting members. The Festive Board will normally be followed by a standard format of toasts. After the Festive Board some members may choose to carry on the evening elsewhere, making the evening a very social affair. One of the delights of Masonry is the Festive Board and the camaraderie and relaxed atmosphere in which it is conducted. You have already been asked to respond to the toast made to you at your Initiation so you will know that a little preparation and advice will make things more comfortable for you.

During dinner it is customary in many Lodges for the Master to take wine with specific brethren. When the Master sounds his gavel during the Festive Board it is expected that the Brethren should be immediately silent, out of respect to the Master. Wine taking is of a personal and mutual nature, all concerned stand and drink. There is a difference between the wine taking during the dinner and the formal toasting after dinner.

It is usual that the experienced members of the Lodge propose the toasts but occasionally you may be called upon for a Toast to give you some experience. You will normally have good notice of any such occasion with time to prepare. As a guideline Toasts can be introduced as follows:- "Worshipful Master, Grand Officers (if any present), Officers, and Brethren all". However it is not obligatory that you start a toast with this formal address, you may prefer to say "Worshipful Master, Brother Wardens, Distinguished Brethren, Brethren all."

No-one expects a Candidate (or even a more experienced Mason) to be the best after dinner speaker – simply do your best. Never say anything that is likely to cause offence and short speeches are often appreciated.

One of the joys of Freemasonry is visiting other Lodges. You are advised to visit a Lodge and see someone else being Initiated as soon as possible. Usually you will be invited by a Brother who knows you are a Member of the Craft. If you anticipate visiting a Lodge where you are not known, please take your Grand Lodge Certificate with you. You will receive your Certificate, in due time. Before you join the meeting, don't forget to sign the visitors' book.

If you intend to visit a Lodge when you are abroad, it is essential that the Lodge is recognised by our governing body. Your Lodge secretary will help you find out. There are organised bodies who style themselves after Freemasons but do not follow the Book of Constitutions and are therefore not recognised by the UGLE.

As a visitor it is usual that you sit and watch. You should use the signs you have been taught, and not those of other Lodges. There are a number of forms of ritual or

'workings' as it is called, such as Emulation, Universal, Bristol, West End, Taylors and so on, with slight differences to each. Find out which working your Lodge uses.

There is a possibility, that as a Visitor, you may be called upon to respond to the toast to the visitors. If you are, you should be aware that it is not appropriate to criticise another Lodge's working, or the way they conduct their Festive Board, but rather to enjoy these differences as part of our Masonic learning.

When responding to a toast, one useful way to start a response is:-

"Worshipful Master, Brother Wardens, Distinguished Brethren, Brethren all. Thank you Brother [name] for proposing the toast to the visitors, and to you the brethren of [name] Lodge for the way you received it."



4. Lodge Officers

When you joined your Lodge you probably noticed there were lots of Masons with separate jobs to do, either guiding you, asking you questions, or teaching you about the Craft. You may have seen there were others who looked after the administration, ceremonial and finances of the Lodge. In fact, to conduct a meeting and ceremony a Lodge ideally requires 11 non-progressive officers and 7 progressive officers. They are listed in the Summons that convenes the meeting. Lodge officers are recognisable by the jewels suspended from their Lodge collars. Where they sit in Lodge also helps indicate their role.

Progressive officers

Usually each year a Brother would progress through these offices on a path from Steward to the highest honour within a Lodge - the Worshipful Master, although each office is subject to the choice of the Master for the year.

Steward



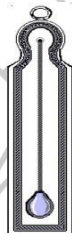
This is likely to be the first office you will have. The Stewards' main function is an integral part of a successful Festive Board, as in many Lodges the Stewards will be responsible for setting out the place-cards prior to the dinner, and serving the drinks during the Festive Board. It is a very good way to meet the members. They are also looked on as stand-ins for any absent Officer, to prepare for future office.

Inner Guard

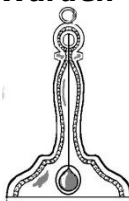
The Inner Guard sits just inside the door of the Lodge. He admits accredited Brethren into the Lodge, advises when there is a Candidate wishing to enter the Lodge, and checks that everything is in order before entrance is allowed.

Junior & Senior Deacons

The Deacons look after and guide the Candidates during ceremonies. Their duties need to be carried out with care and dignity. The Deacons have one of the most interesting and delightful roles, which involves both learning ritual and floor-work. They also carry a wand as a badge of office.

Junior Warden

The Junior Warden is entrusted with ensuring that no unqualified person enters the Lodge, which is why you will see the Inner Guard address the Junior Warden when a Brother wishes to enter the Lodge after it is opened. The Junior Warden sits in the South. In the normal course of events this year's Junior Warden will be next year's Senior Warden

Senior Warden

The Senior Warden sits opposite the Master in the West of the Lodge. The Wardens have different but complementary roles in the Lodge and assist the Master to open and close the Lodge, and conduct the rituals. In the normal course of events this year's Senior Warden will usually be elected as next year's Worshipful Master.

Worshipful Master (WM)



The Worshipful Master is elected each year by the Brethren of the Lodge, and is then "installed" into the Chair by his predecessor. He usually occupies the office for one year, although in an emergency this can be extended to two. He is in charge of the Lodge for his year, acts as its Chairman and normally conducts most of the ceremonies. The Master sits in the East of the Lodge, and must have served as either Senior or Junior Warden for a year, before he can be appointed. On becoming Master for the first time a Mason is then referred to as a Worshipful Brother.

Non-progressive officers

These offices are usually occupied by members who are past Masters of the Lodge and tend to be occupied by the same person for a number of years, to provide continuity and experience. They are also appointed by the Master annually, except the Treasurer and Tyler, who are elected. The IPM is the preceding years WM.

Immediate Past Master (IPM)



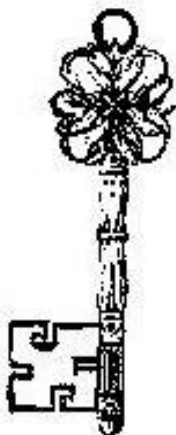
After his year as Master of the Lodge a Mason becomes the Immediate Past Master (IPM). Strictly the IPM is not an Officer of the Lodge, but his position is an important one, as it is his responsibility to sit beside the Master, both in the Temple and the Festive Board, and give him support and guidance when needed.

Chaplain



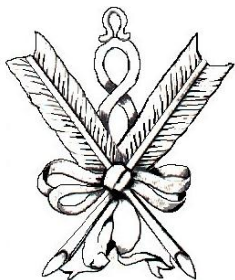
Whilst the discussion of religion (and politics) is not permitted within our meetings, each one opens and closes with prayer. Many Lodges that have no members of the clergy amongst their number, appoint one of their senior Masons to the office of Chaplain.

Treasurer



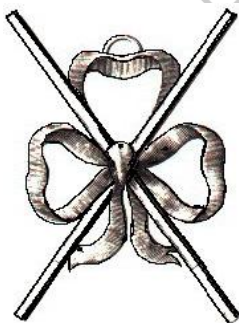
The Treasurer is responsible for the finances of the Lodge. Annually he produces a financial summary report, which is submitted to the auditors, who are elected from within the Lodge membership. It is the responsibility of each member to pay his subscriptions, together with any dining charges to the Treasurer promptly. The Treasurer settles any debts incurred by the Lodge, such as the Lodge rent for the building where meetings are held, the various levies imposed by Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge, and dining expenditure. A Treasurer sets the level of subscriptions for the following year.

Secretary



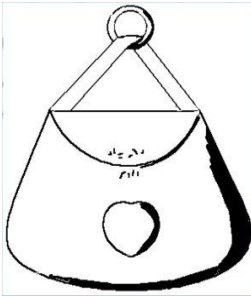
The Secretary has hands-on daily administration of all matters connected with the smooth running of the Lodge. He is effectively the conduit between Grand Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge and your Lodge. He receives the mail addressed to the Lodge, and submits the returns detailing the membership, ceremonies conducted, and matters associated with the day-to-day affairs of the Lodge. Normally a Secretary holds the post for a number of years, providing continuity and experience for successive Masters. It is the Secretary's duty to organise the summons, and distribute them. Annually the Secretary receives a copy of the Masonic Year Book. He holds these publications on behalf of the Lodge.

Director of Ceremonies (DC)



The DC, as his title implies, has the job to direct the ceremonial aspects of our meetings. As in public life when ceremonial is required, such as a State Funeral or Royal Wedding, the important events call for meticulous planning, rehearsal and organising for the requirements of the occasion. The DC's role is to make certain that ceremonies are efficiently conducted with dignity and decorum and that all concerned are aware in advance of what they have to do.

Almoner



The Almoner is effectively the Lodge Welfare Officer, as it is he who should maintain contact with the Brethren who through age or infirmity are unable to attend meetings. He also looks after the welfare of any Lodge widows, or any members suffering from illness. The Almoner would organise petitions for assistance in cases of extreme need, and generally be on the lookout for signs of distress or loneliness among the members of the Lodge or their dependants.

Charity Steward



The Charity Steward is responsible for coordinating the Lodge's charitable affairs in the most efficient way. He should have knowledge of the various methods of making donations and will be happy to give help and advice to the members on these matters. A part of the Charity Steward's role is to encourage members to donate charitably, but always within their means.

Mentor



The Lodge Mentor is usually an experienced Past Master. His role is to pro-actively ensure that any Brother gets the help and support he may require to understand and enjoy his Freemasonry. This may include explaining parts of our ceremonies, or offering general guidance. He will support your proposer/seconders.

Assistant Secretary



The Assistant Secretary's role is to help the Secretary. The duties vary from Lodge to Lodge. Occasionally the Office is given to a Past Master who has been identified as a possible future replacement as Secretary. In some Lodges the Assistant Secretary deals with the Festive Board, booking dinners and generally supervising and supporting the Stewards in their role.

Assistant Director of Ceremonies (ADC)



The Assistant Director of Ceremonies' role is to help the Director of Ceremonies and to act as his understudy. He will also usually assist the Director of Ceremonies at the festive board.

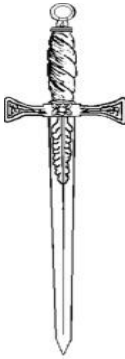
Should the Director of Ceremonies be unable to attend the meeting it is usual that the ADC will cover this role.

Organist



Many Lodges are not fortunate enough to have within their membership a Brother who is adequately skilled to play the Organ at meetings, and so rely on professional organists. Some Lodges have no musical accompaniment. Generally, having an Organist can add to the overall decorum of the meeting.

Tyler



The Tyler guards the outside of the door to the Lodge. This is an elected office. It is often carried out by a senior and experienced member of the fraternity, as he is the officer who prepares the candidate for the ceremonies, and should make sure that he understands the specific salutes in which he has been instructed.

The Tyler is not necessarily a member of the Lodge.



5. Lodge Furniture and Room Layout

You will notice that your Lodge room contained particular items, or furniture, when you were initiated. They have a variety of uses – some are symbolic, and some practical.

You will see these in virtually every Lodge you attend.

**Carpet or
Masonic
Pavement**



In most Lodge Rooms you will find a black and white squared carpet or chequered floor. This denotes our chequered existence, happiness and sorrow. The Masonic tradition is that the floor of the Temple of Solomon was decorated with a mosaic pavement of black and white stones.

**Chairs and
Pedestals**



There are chairs or benches for all those attending our meetings around the squared carpet but three of these chairs will be behind pedestals or small tables. In many cases the chair and the pedestal will be marked with the jewel of the occupant. The chair and pedestal in the East is for the Worshipful Master. Opposite him in the West is the Senior Warden and in the South the Junior Warden. On the Master's pedestal will be placed the Bible, called "The Volume of the Sacred Law". The Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer sit behind a table located in the North.

The Warrant



The Warrant of the Lodge is granted to the Lodge by the Most Worshipful Grand Master at its Consecration. This Warrant must be in the Lodge Room when a Lodge is opened. It will always be displayed at the initiation of a new member and when a new Master is installed. Usually it will be always on display.

Volume of the Sacred Law (VSL)



In the English Constitution, the VSL is the Holy Bible. The VSL is always open when a Lodge is conducting business or one of its ceremonies. The Square and Compasses will be placed upon the VSL. If a Sacred Volume is required for Brethren of a faith other than Christian, then the Volume will be placed in front of or beside the Bible, but never on top.

Rough and Smooth Ashlars



The Senior Warden's pedestal will have a smooth ashlar, or block of stone, resting on it and the Junior Warden's a rough ashlar. These are the 'Immovable Jewels'. They represent two different stages in Freemasonry and understanding. The rough ashlar is thought of as the stone on which an apprentice can learn the art of stonemasonry. The smooth ashlar is used by the more experienced stonemason to hone and perfect his skills.

The Wardens Columns



Each Warden has a column on his pedestal. These will usually show the designs of the Doric order for the Senior Warden, denoting strength, and the Corinthian order for the Junior Warden, denoting beauty. Usually the Columns are surmounted by a celestial or terrestrial globe which point out Masonry universal. The Wardens will also position their Columns to show if the Lodge is 'opened' or 'closed'.

The Working Tools



The Working Tools of each degree are fully explained in the ritual. The appropriate set of tools are displayed in the Lodge for each degree. Those shown here are for the First Degree, or those of an Entered Apprentice Freemason.

Tracing Boards



There are 3 different Tracing Boards (one for each degree). These have always been a feature of Freemasonry. The three boards illustrate the story of each degree, the details will be explained to you during each ceremony.

Lodge Banners



Many Lodges have a Banner, though it is not a necessity. Some Banners date back to the consecration of the Lodge, some are more recent. They often depict the origin, or some particular characteristics of the Lodge.

The Ballot Box



The Ballot Box is used for voting for new members, and can be of a variety of designs. Some have a 'yes' and 'no' drawer; (members place a ballot ball in the relevant drawer) and others one drawer. The correct procedure for balloting in your Lodge will be explained to you. A certain number of black balls or balls in the 'no' drawer, as per Lodge By-Laws, will exclude a potential member, hence the term 'black-balled'. Deacons hand out the appropriate number of balls needed.

Wands of Office



The Director of Ceremonies and his Assistant, and the Senior and Junior Deacons each have a Wand of Office. The DC and his Assistant will always carry their wands when moving about the Lodge. The Deacons, depending on the ritual, may carry theirs.

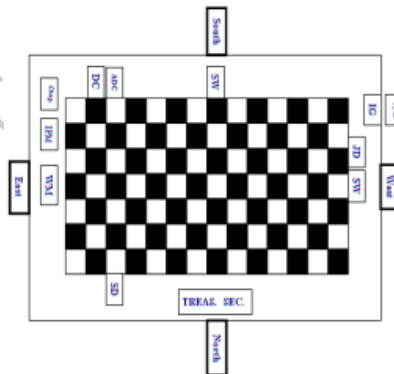
The Gavel

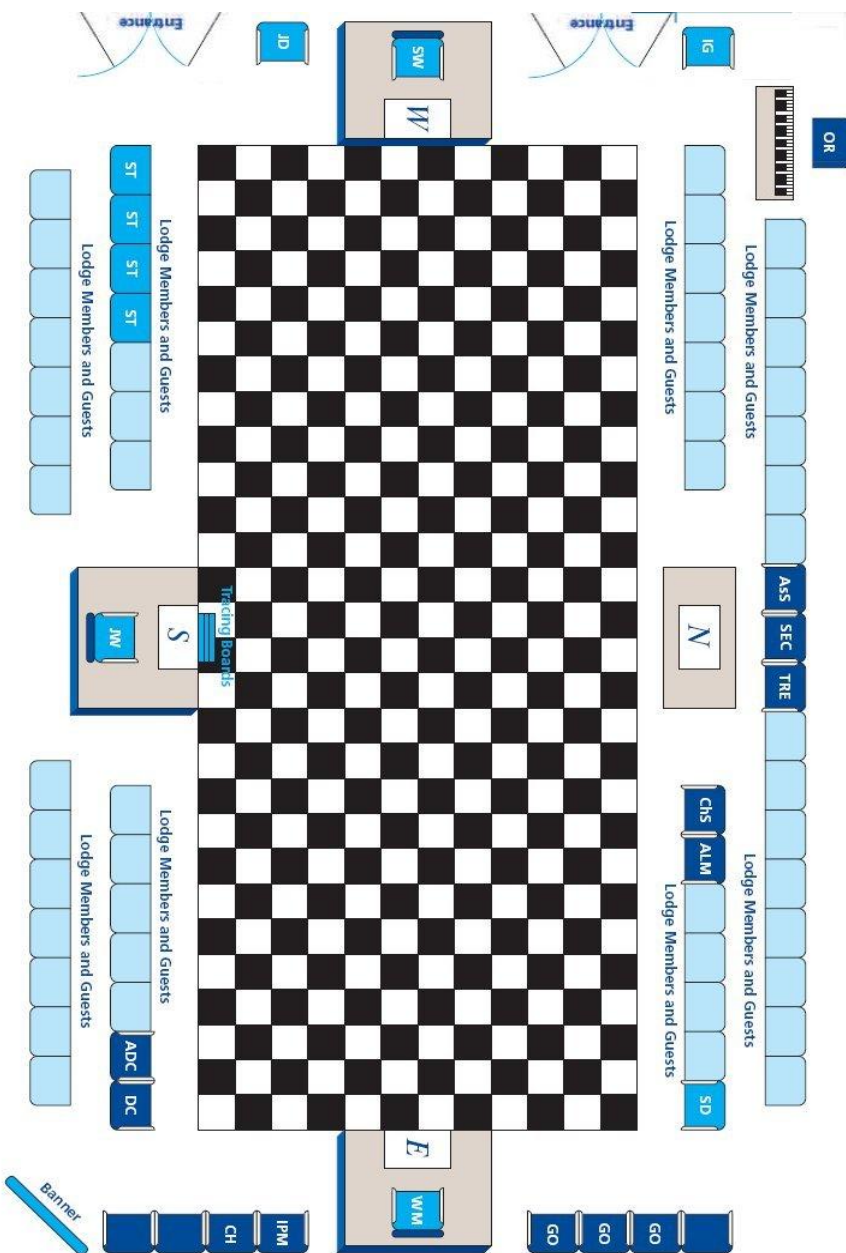


The Worshipful Master, and both Wardens each have a Gavel. A Gavel is used by the Master to gain the members' attention when he is about to speak, this will followed by the Senior Warden and the Junior Warden. The same procedure is followed at the Festive Board when the Master is about to propose a toast or take wine.

When visiting other Lodges you will find they vary as some premises are purpose-built, whilst others are converted or even shared with other functions.

- The point of entry always is in the West and facing East.
 - The WM sits in the East, the SW in the West and the JW in the South
 - The Secretary and Treasurer are normally located on the North side
 - The other junior officers vary somewhat in location from Lodge to Lodge, but generally are in the positions shown
 - The Lodge Banner and Warrant are displayed in the room at the South East
-
- The diagram illustrates the layout of a lodge room. A central checkerboard table is surrounded by seating for officers. The positions are as follows:
- WM (Working Member):** Seated at the East end of the table.
 - JW (Junior Working Member):** Seated at the South end of the table.
 - Sec (Secretary):** Seated at the North end of the table.
 - Treas (Treasurer):** Seated at the North end of the table, adjacent to the Secretary.
 - Other Officers:** Seated around the table, including positions labeled DC, MC, and others.
 - Lodge Banner and Warrant:** Displayed in the room at the South East.





6. Dress Code, Customs and Protocol

The dress code in most Lodges is similar: a dark lounge suit or Morning Dress (a black jacket and waistcoat with striped trousers), appropriate tie, white shirt, white gloves, black shoes and socks. An appropriate tie is either plain black, the Grand Lodge Craft tie or a Provincial Grand Lodge tie. In some Lodges a dinner suit with black bow tie is worn at the Installation Meeting. If you have any queries regarding the dress code, including ties and aprons, please speak to your proposer, Lodge secretary or mentor.

Your apron should be worn with the top above the midriff. Your apron is full of symbolism. It is possible that the string that tied your apron when you were initiated was allowed to hang down at the front. These ends of string are the ancestors of the ornamental fringe seen on 18th Century Masons' aprons, and of the "tassels" on the aprons worn by all brethren once they have become Master Masons. Initially aprons will be provided by the Tyler, however when you become a Master Mason you are expected to purchase your own. They are available from a variety of Masonic regalia suppliers.



You may also notice that some of the Brethren wear dark blue aprons and collars and occasionally someone may be wearing a red one. They will be happy to explain the significance to you so please do not be afraid to ask. The only regalia, badges and other ornaments permitted in the Lodge are those attributable to the Craft itself and when you become a member of a Chapter, your appropriate Royal Arch jewel.

You will also notice that many of the brethren in the Temple wear medals, or breast jewels. These jewels fall into various categories, including

- Royal Arch Jewels
- Past Masters jewels
- Centenary Jewels
- Founders Jewels
- Charity Jewels (See section 7)

Royal Arch Jewel



Past Masters Jewel



Example Centenary Jewel



Example Charity Jewel



The Book of Constitutions outlines the various rules regarding jewels and contains some illustrations. Jewels also refer to the pendants on the collars which the Lodge Officers and others wear, and these are called collar jewels to avoid confusion.

CUSTOMS

Customs vary enormously from ritual to ritual and Lodge to Lodge, but in general the following are used throughout Craft Masonry.

- Salutes and signs are used throughout Lodge meetings and change depending on what degree is being worked. Each degree has a different sign or signs. You have already seen and been given the First Degree Sign. You will be taught the others when you go through the next degrees.
- Whenever a Brother speaks to the Worshipful Master or to the Wardens in the Lodge Room (nowhere else), a salute is given. The salute is the sign of the degree in which the Lodge is working at the time.
- The phrase "So mote it be" is used in Masonry instead of the word "Amen". If an organist is present the words are sung at the end of hymns and prayers. Sometimes, for example, after a spoken Grace at the Festive Board, it is simpler just to say "Amen". The literal meaning of the phrase is "May it be so!", or "So be it!"
- Brethren do not salute one another, but by way of acknowledgement, perhaps as thanks for a courtesy, the Court Bow is given. This consists of standing upright, and simply bowing the head slightly.

- The custom in a Lodge for moving about the Lodge Room in "open" Lodge depends entirely on which ritual the Lodge uses. Some rituals demand clockwise "squaring" at all times; others allow more freedom of movement. "Stepping-off with the left foot" is standard practice.
- At a Lodge meeting, when addressing or referring to a Brother by name, the format is "Brother (name)" or "Worshipful Brother". Whether first names or surnames are used will depend on how formal the proceedings are at the time.
- If you are making a speech, you may have to include an individual in the initial acknowledgments, perhaps even "Right Worshipful Brother" or "Very Worshipful Brother". In such a case, you should check with your Director of Ceremonies or Secretary as to the correct protocol.
- When addressing or referring to Brethren by their Office, the correct form is "Worshipful Master", "Brother Secretary", "Brother Treasurer", "Brother Immediate Past Master", etc., even if the Officer happens to be a Worshipful Brother by rank.
- As in any formal meeting, all remarks are addressed to the Chairman who in our case is the Worshipful Master.
- If you write a letter to a Mason, never include a Masonic rank or other Masonic references such as Lodge details etc., in the address on the envelope. Inside, it may be appropriate and polite to include the full Masonic rank and title.
- The correct posture when singing the National Anthem is to be standing upright, feet together with a straight back and hands at the sides.

- If you have to miss a Lodge meeting, do send apologies to the Secretary in advance. He will need to have accurate numbers of those attending, particularly for the dining arrangements. He will record apologies in the Minutes. If you happen to be in Office, then the DC and the Preceptor will need to know well in advance to organise a replacement.

Finally at your interview it is likely that you were asked if your partner supported your application. This is an important question, as it is hoped that your partner will support, approve and encourage your participation and the time and costs involved in belonging to our fraternity.

Most individual Lodges hold a number of social functions at which your partner and family are encouraged to attend.



7. Charity

As you learned at your Initiation, charity has been a significant part of Freemasonry since its earliest days, although unlike other fundraising organisations most of the money we raise comes out of our own pockets. So whilst every brother is expected to contribute, it's important that no one should over-commit himself to charitable giving.

Annually your Lodge has to pay an amount of money to our governing body, The United Grand Lodge of England, in respect of each of its members. Additionally a payment is made on behalf of each member to The Grand Charity. The Lodge collects this money by way of your annual subscription, in addition to the amount collected through the alms bag, and other charity giving methods

Freemasonry is the largest contributor to charitable causes after the National Lottery. In the past five years it is estimated the Freemasons under UGLE have donated in excess of £75m to charity.

When Freemasons or their dependants fall upon hard times, financial assistance may be available from their Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge or one of national Masonic Charities.

The Deacons usually circulate a bowl, broken column, or alms bag at each meeting. Put an amount of your choosing in the bag. You may also be asked to put it in an envelope so tax can be reclaimed, which can add a significant amount to the Lodge's giving. How the proceeds of the Alms collection are applied is a matter for individual Lodges.

You may also be asked by your Lodge's Charity Steward to complete a standing order to pay a regular small amount for charity on a monthly or other basis. This can be an effective and painless way to support charity and it allows the Lodge to claim back the tax too.



The West Lancashire Freemasons' Charity is the charity of the Freemasons of the Masonic Province of West Lancashire. It was formed in April 2008 by the amalgamation of the seven Masonic charities operating in the Province. Its funds are raised entirely from donations by Freemasons. We do not receive money from the general public however, we do provide assistance to Masons and non-Masons.



The Province was the first to be invited to hold the MCF 2021 Festival in support of the Masonic Charitable Foundation which brings together and over-arches the four main Masonic charities of the Grand Charity, Samaritan Fund, Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution and the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys. Ask your Charity Steward for further information.



Wear
your
Stewards
Jewel
with
Pride

8. Other Available Resources

Within the Province of West Lancashire, in addition to the Group and Provincial websites, 2 further resources are available to further your Masonic Education.

SOLOMON



Solomon is an on line system developed by UGLE and contains over 700 Masonic resources in varying formats:

- Papers for personal study
- Short “nuggets”/talks (5 – 10 mins)
- Explanation of ceremonies
- Academic research papers
- Presentations
- Quizzes
- Podcasts & Videos

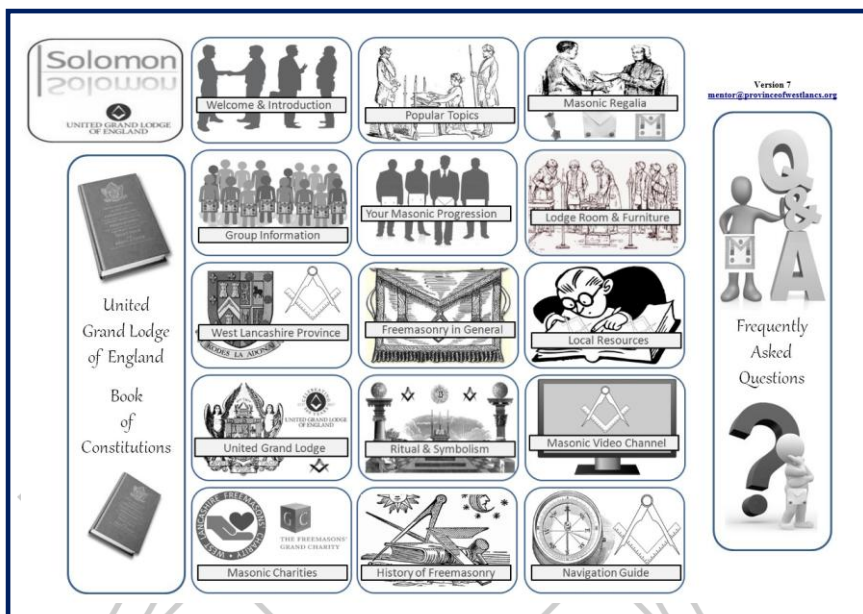
It can be accessed at **solomon.ugle.org.uk**. Registration is required which requires a valid email address. The website contains resources for personal use and also resources such as talks and demonstrations which can be given at lodge meetings.

Enrolment is required for each module and it is strongly recommended that you only enrol to the generic modules and those applicable to an Entered Apprentice.

See "*Solomon - Guide to Available Resources*" Booklets.

WEST LANCS ELECTRONIC WELCOME PACK

This resource is available via your Lodge or Group Mentor and may be provided on CD, memory stick or via download.



It contains interactive resources to complement those found on Solomon and covers topics such as:

- Regalia
- Masonic Progression
- FAQ's
- Virtual Lodge Room
- Masonic History
- West Lancashire Masonic Charities
- Book of Constitutions

Ask your Lodge Mentor for more information on how to gain access to these valuable resources.



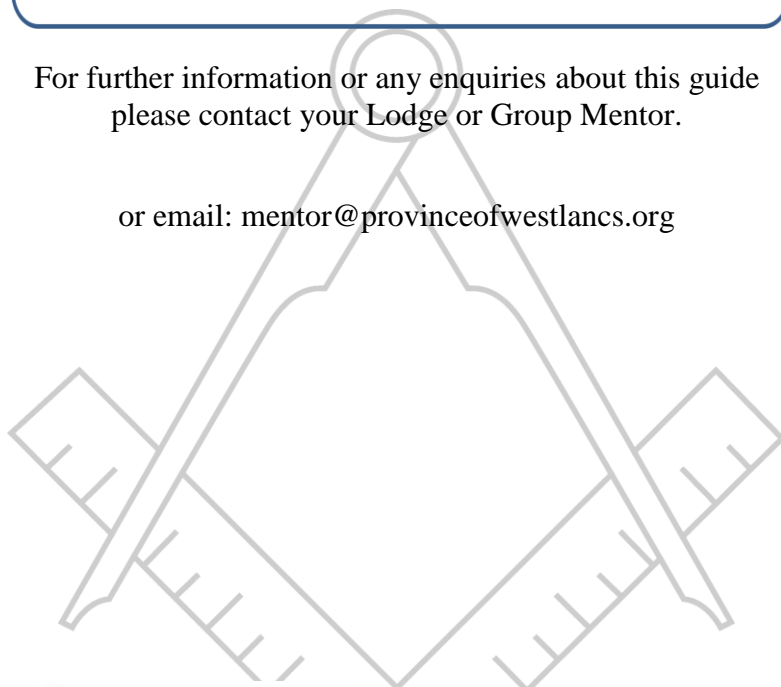
West Lancashire Freemasons

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF WEST LANCASHIRE

“Furthering your Masonic education through mentoring”

For further information or any enquiries about this guide
please contact your Lodge or Group Mentor.

or email: mentor@provinceofwestlancls.org



New Initiates Guide to Freemasonry